

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 were previously presented in the above-identified application. Upon entry of this response, which amends claim 1 and cancels claims 18-24, claims 1-17 remain pending. The Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating claims 18 and 19 as including allowable subject matter. No new matter has been added with this response.

Applicants are canceling claims 18-24 to place the subject application in condition for early allowance. These claims, however, are being canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Applicants therefore reserve the right to reinstate the originally filed claim in a co-pending application.

CONCLUSION

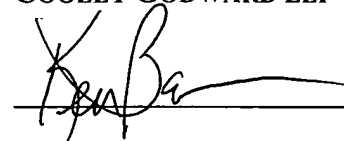
In sum, all of the independent claims and their associated dependent claims should now be in a condition for allowance, which is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner believes that any of the claims are not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned to resolve any outstanding issues.

Dated: 9 Feb 2004

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